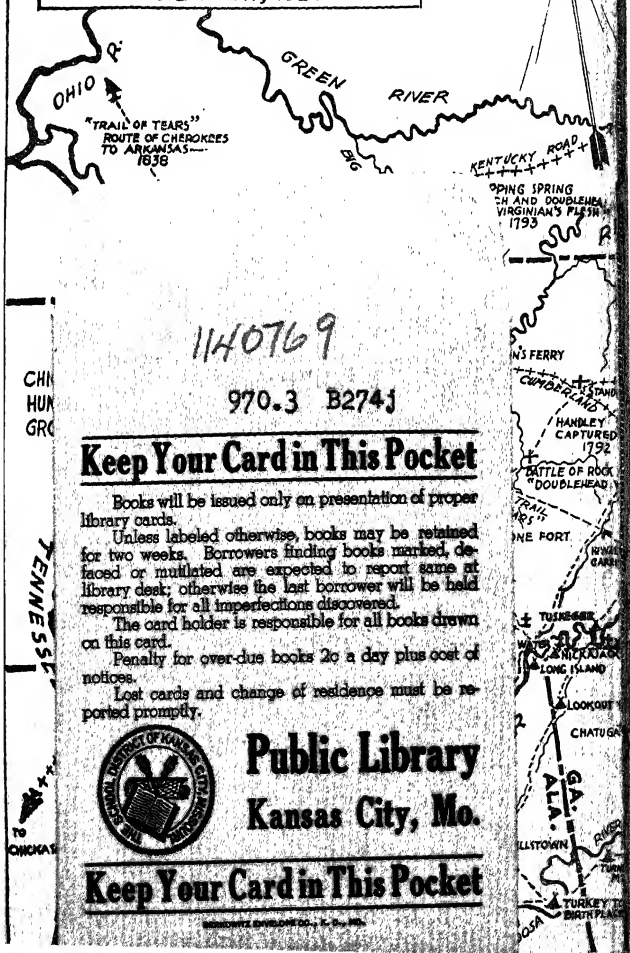




# THE CHEROKEE COUNTRY

COMPILED FROM MAPS BY  
STUART, HUNTER, AND ROYCE  
J. P. BROWN, 1937



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Lying down near Joe's camp.

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JOE

MO

# THE CHEROKEE

By

S. M. BARRETT

*Author of*

*Geronimo's Story of His Life; Practical Ped-*

*agogy; Mocco an Indian Boy; Hoistiah*

*an Indian Girl; Government in*

*Oklahoma; Beaver the Paw-*

*nee; Shinkah the Osage;*

*History and Govern-*

*ment of Oklahoma;*

*Bob the Pioneer.*

ILLUSTRATED

Kansas City, Missouri

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ON

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## FOREWORD

The author lived for ten years in that part of Oklahoma formerly known as The Cherokee Nation. During that period he gathered the data used in this book. The names of Rose, Joe, and the members of their families are not the real names of these characters in the story but the incidents are real.

The author, by selecting a series of real incidents in the history of the Cherokee Indians of long ago, and weaving them into a coherent narrative of the life of a fictitious individual, has attempted to portray the home life of the Cherokee Indians.

If this little book presents a vivid concept of the life, joys, and sorrows of the typical Cherokee Indian of a century ago, the author's objectives will have been reached.





## CHAPTER I

### PLAYMATES

More than a hundred years ago a little Cherokee Indian boy, Joe Ross, lived with his father, grandfather and grandmother on their plantation in northeastern Georgia. When Joe was a tiny baby his mother died and thereafter a Negro slave, "Liza," who belonged to the Ross family, became Joe's nurse. In fact, she was called Joe's "black mama."

Liza was therefore an important factor in Joe's infancy, and she always felt that Joe was more than her young master. In a way, she loved him as her own child, but as a very superior child. As the chief house servant, Liza always looked after Joe's welfare and to some extent was held responsible for his care and comfort.

On a certain morning late in springtime the

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

Ross household was astir early as usual and Liza served the family breakfast but Joe was not present. Joe's father noting the boy's absence asked Liza why he was not up yet. Just as she had done before and did many times in later years, Liza said, "Master, I just didn't call him yet. I been so busy and besides he don't seem so well lately." She always excused Joe in some way when she thought he might be chided or corrected.

"Now, Liza," said the father, "don't spoil the boy. I know how you feel, but you must call him before long."

The family finished breakfast and the master sent the slaves into the fields to work. Old Bige, Liza's husband, barefooted and bareheaded, plowing in the cotton field, sang as he plowed; a thousand birds filled the air with sweetest music, but Joe slept on and on. At last, Liza knew she must go to the field to work with the other slaves or be scolded for

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

being late. Then she called up the great stairway. "Joe, you better get up, honey. Little Miss Rose is coming today. Didn't you know that?"

Of course Joe knew it and he had intended to get up early on that account. Now he realized that the sun was shining and he did not know how late it might be. So he hurriedly put on hunting shirt, leggings, and moccasins—his usual Indian garments—and descended into the dining room where Liza waited to serve. Thus she greeted him: "Why, honey, you ought to have had your breakfast before this. Here's your ham and eggs and your pancakes. They are still hot. Here's your molasses and your glass of milk. Now eat your breakfast and maybe your daddy'll let you go with him this morning a little while until Rose comes."

Joe ate his breakfast and went to the barn only to learn that his father had already gone

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

to the open range to look after the herds of cattle and horses. "Well," thought Joe, "it was late, sure enough."

When the boy returned to the "mansion" (a large log house built of solid hand-hewn timbers throughout) Liza had gone to the cotton field with the other slaves and his grandmother was alone in big house sewing. Looking up when the boy entered, she said, "Day by day you look more like your mother, but you have not her ways. I wish that today when little Rose is here you would not be rude. Grandmother is getting old and does not like to be worried. Do you understand?" "Yes, ma'am," said he, and quietly left the house. He got his bow and arrows and calling to his spotted dog, Ani-wa-di, (Paint), went into the woods to hunt.

Paint was soon barking at a squirrel in a tall tree, but try as he would the little Indian could not hit the squirrel with his arrows.

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

Presently he looked toward the house and saw his playmate, Rose Starr, coming on her pony and he hastened to meet her. She had come alone all the way from her home. She was very proud of the achievement and so was Joe.

Her pony was taken to the barn by one of the Negro slaves and the two children went at once to the old grapevine swing that hung from a great oak tree in the back yard near the orchard fence. Here they played for a long time under Rose's direction. At last, Joe said: "Are you tired of swinging?"

"No," said Rose, "let's play here all morning?"

"But," said Joe, "the hawks have been catching our chickens. There is one over there in the big dead tree beyond the barn now. I want to sneak into the barn to see if I can shoot him when he comes down to steal a chicken."

Then he took up his bow and arrows and Rose

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

followed him quietly. Up behind the big house they went and when the house and barn concealed them from the hawk as he sat sunning himself while waiting for breakfast to appear, the children went into the barn. Very quietly Joe got some corn and without revealing his presence to the hawk tossed the feed into the open lot. The chickens were in a plum thicket at the corner of the barn lot, but when they saw the corn falling, they at once began to come out into the open to get the food.

The boy concealed himself behind the half-open door, but he did not have long to wait. Seeing breakfast ready, the hawk swooped down and reached with his talons to secure his prize. At that instant a luck shot from Joe's bow struck the hawk under the wing. The wounded hawk missed his chicken, of course, and rolled over on the barnyard. Recovering himself quickly, he started to fly away as Joe's arrows sped by him. The ar-

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

rows did not again reach the mark, but the hawk was too severely wounded to get farther than the top rail of the barnyard fence where he sat swaying back and forth, racked with pain. With his last arrow, the boy crept closer and shot again but the arrow glanced off. However, the hawk fell over the fence in a dying condition from the wound he had already received from the first arrow.

"Come on!" said Joe to his little playmate, and the two children ran down through the open bars of the lot and around to where the hawk lay gasping for breath. Deftly the little hunter struck the great bird over the head with his bow. Then he carefully lifted the hawk, holding him from the back firmly by each wing for Rose's inspection. But Rose came too near and the bird's great talons closed on her arm, breaking the skin and fastening like a vise in the sleeve of her dress as the hawk stiffened in the last agony of death.

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

The children were unable to disengage the hawk's talons from their death hold and together they carried him up toward the house. Joe's grandfather was just coming across the lawn and they went to him with their trouble. Without speaking, the aged Cherokee, using his pocket knife, quickly cut the tendons near the foot of the hawk and then the talons were easily released. Then Joe appealed to his grandfather to get the arrow out of the hawk for the barbs held it firmly in the flesh of the bird. A single movement of the old Indian's knife and the flesh was cut away so that the arrow could be removed. Joe then explained to his grandfather that he had shot the hawk "on the wing."

"Good," said the aged Indian. This was the only word he had spoken. Then in silence the old man walked on, leaving the children to plan for themselves.

In their dilemma the children went out in



## JOE THE CHEROKEE

the cotton field and appealed to Liza, who leaving her hoe in the field, came with them to the great farm kitchen. "Honey," said she to Rose, "that is a bad scratch, but I'll fix it all right. I'll put turpentine on it. It'll hurt but it'll take out the poison." Pushing up the little sleeve on the girl's arm, the old slave applied the turpentine to the wound. The scratch was not deep, but the turpentine caused the dusky maiden to wince a little, at any rate.

As for mending the dress, the old Negro said she did not understand that but went with the children to Joe's grandmother. Mrs. Ross, Joe's grandmother, carefully mended the rent in the dress and the children went forth again. They ran directly into the orchard and climbed up into a cherry tree where they ate all the cherries that seemed to taste good. Then they returned to the swing.

Joe could not be content to stay near the

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

house but insisted that Rose should go with him and Paint to hunt squirrels down in the woods. They did not find any squirrels that time but Rose again had bad luck with her new dress.

While the children were planning what they could do to get the torn dress mended again, and not get a scolding for being careless, the great dinner bell from the top of its post near the kitchen door began to ring out in ponderous tones its welcome call to everybody on the plantation that the noonday meal was ready. Then the children skipped away through the woods to the great farm house. They said nothing to anyone about the torn dress. Afterwards they played again at the grapevine swing. When old Liza had finished the dishes and left the "mansion" the children ran to her as she went to the slaves' quarters. They confided to her the secret of the second accident to Rose's dress. "You all better not

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

tell the missus this time," said old Liza "She's sleeping in her big arm chair and she don't want to be disturbed." Then turning to Rose she said, "I'll just pin it up for you, then you all run along and play and say nothing about it. Your mama will fix it when you get home tonight, honey."

Joe wanted to hunt again but Rose would not agree to go hunting any more. Hunting had been disastrous to her new dress and she preferred to play house. So they played house. Joe was the "papa" and went out on a "big hunt", while Rose, as "mamma", was busy in her "house". Thus they spent the long summer afternoon until old Liza was sent to tell Rose that it was time for her to go home. Her pony was brought from the barn; also Joe's pony, and the two children rode down through the woods across the valley and around the foot of another mountain to where Rose lived. At the Starr home. Joe turned his pony and

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

raced with his dog, Paint. At sunset he was home again and he was just as hungry as usual. After dinner he stayed in the kitchen, where old Liza told him of "hants" (Haunts, haunted houses, haunted forests, etc.).

By and by his grandmother called him into the great living room. Soon Joe asked his grandmother about the spirits. Then his grandmother said, "Have the slaves been gabbing their nonsense to you? Well, you needn't believe all their ghost stories. Now call Liza and go to bed."

Joe called the old slave and together they climbed the stairway. Old Liza tucked the boy snugly in bed, blew out the candle and descending the stairway passed from the "mansion" back to the slaves' quarters, but ere she reached her own cabin Joe was fast asleep.

## CHAPTER II

### THE GREEN CORN FESTIVAL

One afternoon with his bow and arrows and his dog, Paint, for companion, Joe went to the woods to hunt, as he had often done before, but this time he really killed a squirrel. It was the first time he had succeeded in doing this and, therefore, it was with pardonable pride that he carried home his game. Liza, who was hurrying from the field, took the game and readily agreed to cook it for Joe's dinner. Then the boy hurried into the house, and he was just in time, too, for hardly had he entered his home when the rainstorm began. While it was raining Joe's father said, "Son, I think you should learn to read. Sometime I shall send you to school, but for the present I shall try to teach you your letters and give

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

you a little start." The boy made no reply, but he was glad.

After the rain had ceased, the sun came out again and Joe went out to play. Presently Mr. Starr, Rose's father, and two other Cherokees rode up with horn and hounds and the boy's father prepared to join them. Joe asked to be allowed to go with them but his father said, "The wolves have been killing sheep and calves in this settlement so we are going to try to catch them. You are not large enough yet to go on this hunt. You must stay at home this time, but you may go with us to attend the Green Corn Festival next month."

The boy readily agreed. He realized that he was too small to go on a wolf chase, but just the same he wanted to go. However, the great Green Corn Festival was an important gathering which he had never been permitted to attend and he very much desired to go.

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

Every year when the roasting ears in the corn fields were ready to be served as food, all the Cherokee families would journey on horseback into a certain camping ground where for many days they stayed together celebrating the event and having a good social time with their fellows from different parts of the Cherokee country. It was an old, old custom with these Indians, still retained by them although they were at that time a civilized people. When the time for the journey drew near, the Ross household began to get ready and Joe watched. It seemed to him that the preparations would never end. The slaves packed the buffalo skin tepees and also bundles of provisions, bedding, hunting and fishing equipment, while his grandmother supervised the packing of clothing to be taken on this trip. Among the cherished objects taken for his benefit was a new nankeen\* suit. made after the white man's style.

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

At last the eventful day came. The camp supplies were loaded on pack horses, which were driven along the trail that lead back into the mountains. Leaving some slaves to care for the plantation, but taking Liza and Bige with them, the Ross family followed on horse-back. Joe rode his spotted pony and his dog, Paint, gambolled along by his side. That night they camped by a great spring near old Shield Eater's home. Early the next morning they were on the way again. Just at evening they came to the camping ground and soon had their quarters established. The camp was located in a beautiful mountain valley and the Cherokees were encamped in seven groups or clans. Each of the clan encampments was called a village.

The village in which Joe's family pitched their tepees was one of the largest and near

\*Nankeen—Cloth made of cotton. This cloth was made on hand-looms in the Cherokee homes.



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their tepees were the tepees of Rose's father. On one side of the encampment was a large, clear stream and all about grew trees, grasses and wild flowers in abundance. The packs were all taken from the backs of the horses and then the pack horses and the saddle horses, all in one herd, were driven quite a distance from the camp and turned loose to graze on the luxuriant grass. During the daytime some of the larger Indian boys watched after the herd of horses, but at night certain of the horses were confined in a temporary corral and, as the others would not leave them for any great distance, no watch was set over them.

After dinner a large fire was lighted at a central point and from every village came the Indians. Tom-toms were brought out and the dance was on. Joe never knew at what time the dance ceased, for he fell asleep by the camp fire and old Liza carried him to his blank-

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

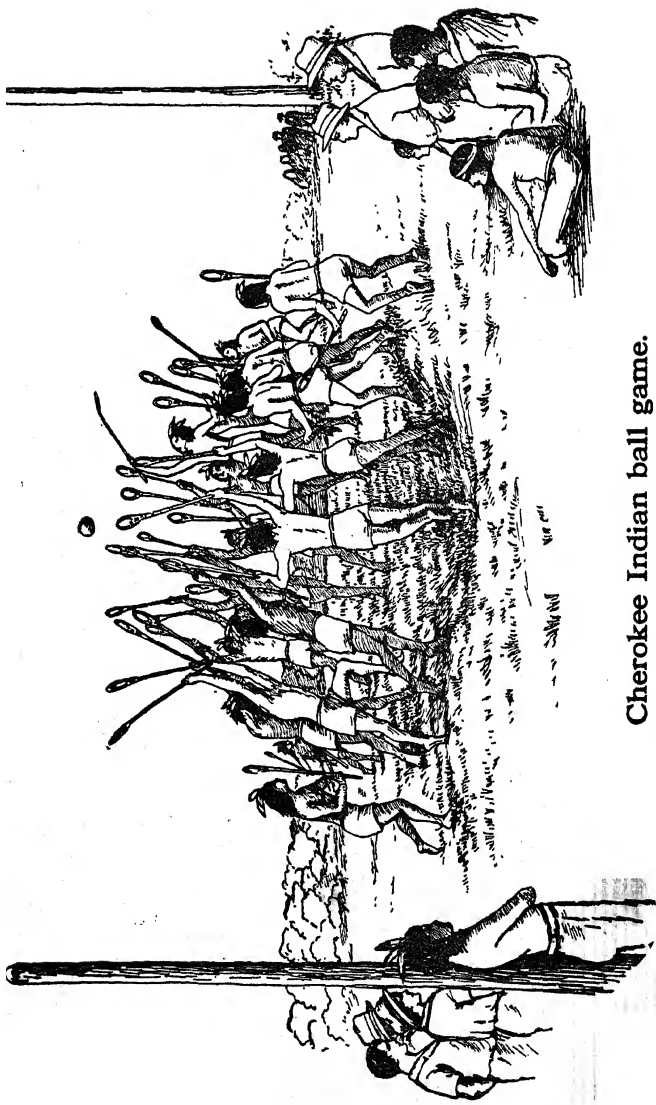
ets in the tepee. In the morning, it seemed quite early, his grandmother awakened him. Although he still seemed to be a little tired, he was very happy. He was even more happy when his grandmother dressed him up in his new nankeen suit. Joe thought that the other children would admire his new clothes, but was disappointed. No sooner had he met his playmates than they shouted with derision, "Unake"! (white man). Rose alone did not taunt him, but she seemed to avoid him. The day was a most unhappy one for Joe, but like a true member of his race, he stood staunchly by his new suit and wore it until bedtime.

The next morning when his grandmother came to dress him in his new clothes he burst into tears. This was unusual. Indian children are not given to crying. Joe was five years old—too big, almost, to cry. Certainly something had gone quite wrong. After much coaxing he told her of his humiliation of the day

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

before. His grandmother comforted him, as grandmothers are wont to do, and promptly the nankeen suit was packed away. Hunting shirt, leggings and moccasins went on quickly, for Joe needed no help with these garments. Then the small boy went out to play again. He was warmly welcomed by his dusky clansmen who the day before had ridiculed him. He seemed to be able to jump farther, run faster, and climb trees better than ever before. That day, deep down in his heart, he resolved that never again would he imitate the white man in anything. Really and truly he always kept this resolution.

It was indeed a grand festival for the Cherokees, and especially it was a glorious time for Joe—an occasion long to be remembered by the little brown boy of the Georgia hills. Joe was, of course, too small to take part in the inter-clan ball games, but he was an enthusiastic supporter of his own village players and



Cherokee Indian ball game.

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

much depressed when they lost the final game. However, he still had hopes for the horse race. He was quite sure that his father's black mare would win the race against the Deer Clan horse. It was a splendid race from the start. When in the middle of the course the black mare was seen to be in the lead by half a length, the little Cherokee so forgot his Indian dignity that he cheered. However, at the end of the course the spotted horse came more than a head in front of his father's racer, and again Joe's clansmen were the losers.

All of the contests were arranged in a somewhat formal manner. The winners of each group were pitted against such winners from other groups in the final or sweepstakes races or contests. The foot-racing was of three classes: small boys, under six years old; larger boys, and men. These were the final events of the encampment or festival, and the races for small boys were to be called first.

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

When in Joe's village the small boys were assembled to try out for the races, he was the last to enter the lists. Finally, urged by the old slaves, Liza and Bige, and encouraged by Rose, he took his place just as the boys were ready to start. He was surprised at his own speed, for he easily won that race. That day he ran over and over again on the race course with each boy of his village who challenged him, and not once was he in danger of losing the race among his own clansmen. At last his father called him and told him to cease any more racing, for the great final or sweep-stake race for the small boys was to be run the following day. Joe must save his strength for the final race.

The group or clan, of which Joe was a member, seemed very anxious for him to win. This was perhaps because in other contests, so far, this clan had not a single championship to its credit. So it was with the encouragement

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

of his entire clan that our little friend entered the final race.

Seven little Cherokees from seven different villages or clans, each divested of clothing that might hinder—each a champion in his clan—stood on the race course late in the afternoon of that summer's day and hundreds of supporters stood by, each ready to rejoice in victory. Among the contestants was one boy renowned as a racer. He was of the Ani-ka-wi (Deer) Clan, and certainly looked fit to meet all expectations for fleetness. But each of the other six had come to try; each was entitled to enter the finals and, besides, no one knows how a race may end.

By and by an absolute silence settled over the great crowd of Indians as each little bronze figure stood on the mark set for the final dash. Then a sharp signal sounded, and like bolts of bronze they shot forward, but Joe was behind. At once, a dozen boys shouted in deri-

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

sion: "Unake"! (white man) and Joe heard. Then his resolution brought forward all the reserve strength and speed of his perfect little body and gradually he passed, one by one, each of his opponents except the Deer Clan boy. That boy was still in the lead, urged forward by the pride of former victories and of clan superiority. Joe's eyes almost closed, his face became set in rigid lines, and like a flying missile he began to gain on his last opponent as they neared the final goal. Would he make it a tie? Could he catch up and refute the taunt, "White Man"? Thus he thought and in desperation he did his best. It was the last yard of the race when his body, flashing in the rays of the setting sun, was seen to be clearly in front of the Deer Clan runner as they crashed to the final mark. Joe had won!

As he lay resting on the soft green grass, near by the end of the course, his father came and said, "Good boy," as he patted his son in



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pride and then waited to walk back to the tepee with the champion of all the Cherokee clans. Joe was happy, but in true Indian style, he refrained from self-praise. However, he did rejoice, of course, and all the Cherokees of his village rejoiced with him.

At evening, as the camp fires shown brightly in the growing darkness and he was alone with Rose, she praised him and he said, "Oh, that wasn't anything. I was just lucky. They were not expecting me to win, but do you know what, Rose? I think I could do it again. I'll bet they don't call me 'Unaka' again. No 'Unaka' could run faster than a Cherokee, could he?"

And she answered, "Of course not. But, Joe, I never called you that. Not even the day you wore the funny suit. Joe, we are partners, I couldn't treat you wrong."

Then he said, "Rose, you are a good girl. When I am a big man I'll make you my wife."

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

No Indian could offer greater honor to a maiden than that, nor did one ever make the offer with more firm resolve than did this little brown boy. But, of course, it was only the talk of a child. It was a thing to be thought of no importance.

At last, but all too soon for Joe, the great festival came to a close. Friends said "good-bye" and each family returned home. After that, through the remaining summertime, day by day, Joe played at home. Evening after evening he studied at his father's knees. Once in a while Rose came to play with him, and perhaps as frequently, he went to her home to play with her.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ROAD TO KNOWLEDGE

For about two years Mr. Ross the younger was Joe's only teacher. However, as the grandfather grew older, more and more of the management of the plantation became his son's task. Then the elder Ross became ill and soon ceased to leave the house. Late in autumn he was confined to his bed. Then Joe's father and grandmother watched by the bedside of the sick man day by day and night by night. One cold day in winter, the great house was very still and they carried the grandfather out to the family burial ground, under the tall pine trees beyond the orchard where the boy's mother lay. After this, Joe felt that he had been within the shadow of the spirit-land. He also felt that he had learned a very unpleasant

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

lesson, for he had at last realized that death would come to all and bring sorrow.

By that time Joe was seven years of age and he had learned to read easy sentences; to write and to draw well, indeed; and, without having had any formal lessons in numbers, he had learned to count and was a master of the simpler operations in arithmetic.

He did not really like to study. No, indeed, he was a real out-of-door boy. Hunting, fishing, or roaming through the pathless woods were the things of enjoyment to him. To float lazily down the Coosa River in his light canoe, to spear a fish once in a while; to steal upon game in the forest; to ride with his father among the herds; to play ball or to race with the other Cherokee boys—these were the real things. To play with Rose; to listen to old Liza's prattle of strange superstitions; to master new lessons in his book; these were pleasures, of course, but they were not things he

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

enjoyed most. He wanted to excel in manly things.

One day there came to Joe's home a stranger—a tutor for him. He was a Mr. Caleb Gearheart from Savannah, a young man with little education and less money. An acquaintance of Mr. Ross's had highly recommended young Gearheart for this position, and he had been employed without consulting Joe, of course.

It might not have seemed so bad to the little Indian to have had a Cherokee teacher, but Gearheart was a white man. This white man was to be Joe's guide and example. He was to lead on the road to knowledge. Long ago, Joe had resolved never again to imitate the white man and the humiliation of the nankeen suit at the great Green Corn Festival was still in his memory. However, the boy wished to obey his father, and relied upon his parent's knowledge as to what was best.

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

Therefore, he resolved to get the knowledge, but he also resolved to avoid all imitations of this or any other white man. Thus his formal schooling began.

Half of his playtime was taken from him at once. It seemed that a great burden of care had been thrust upon him, but it was not his nature to complain. Therefore, with vigor, if not with very great delight, he began his travels along the road to knowledge. To the boy's great relief he found that the lessons were not hard, but oh!, the sacrifice of time he had to make; of time taken from what, according to his method of thinking, was real life. But he never complained to anyone. Gearheart never scolded the boy and never seemed to assert himself in any way. He fixed Joe's tasks and patiently explained what the boy could not understand.

One day Gearheart proposed to go with the little Indian into the forest and the boy

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

agreed. They went at once into the deep forest along the Coosa River to spend a day hunting and fishing and that day was full of surprises for each of them. The first surprise came when Joe, seeing some deer coming in their direction, quietly concealed himself to await their coming and to get a better look at the pretty little spotted fawns. The boy had no idea but that Gearheart, seeing his caution, would conceal himself also, but he was amazed when his tutor called out, "Joe, why are you stopping there?"

Of course, the deer heard and ran away. However, the tutor had not observed the deer, nor did he realize what Joe meant by concealing himself, until the noise of the deer dashing away caused him at last to see them. Gearheart was sorry he had disturbed the animals, and thus failed to have the opportunity of observing them. "Let us follow them, Joe," said he.

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

"What for?" said Joe. "Now they are a mile away and they know we are here. We could never get another chance to watch them while they are scared."

The tutor then began to ask many questions about the ways of wild things and Joe explained these things to him.

Joe had his bow and arrows with him and suggested still hunting for squirrels, to which the tutor readily agreed. The boy explained the need of silence. Soon they were seated and Joe had indicated by pointing his arrow, that a squirrel was coming down a nearby tree. Then he fitted an arrow in the bow and had just begun to raise the weapon cautiously when Gearheart sprang up and shouted, "Look out!"

Joe looked where the tutor pointed but saw only a frightened black snake hurrying away. He was so disgusted that Gearheart must have noted it, for he said, "That serpent



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was coming right at me. It was frightfully horrible."

"Not even as bad as a fly," said Joe.

"What?" said his tutor. "A venomous serpent not dangerous?"

"That was only a harmless black snake and you yelled and scared the squirrel away," said the boy.

"Well, I was really scared," said Gearheart. "I'm sorry."

By and by Joe said, "Lets go to the River and gig some fish."

Gearheart agreed, but asked Joe to explain everything so that he might understand and would not again make an annoying error. The boy explained that to gig fish meant to float quietly on the water in a canoe and spear or gig fish that came near. Once in the canoe Joe shoved off and soon the two were drifting slowly along the stream and Gearheart thought nothing could have been more de-

## JOE THE CHEROKEE

lightful. Fish swam around them and under them, and still Joe did not cast the spear. Finally, the boy who had been sitting with the gig in hand cast and sure enough struck the fish. Soon a fine fish lay in the bottom of the canoe and Joe began to drive the light craft to the opposite bank where they were soon ashore and Joe started a fire.

Gearheart had been quiet for a long time now and because he did not understand the need of a fire inquired of Joe, "Why the fire?"

"To cook the fish," said the boy.

Joe cleaned the fish and then, going down to the river bank, covered it with a thick layer of clay and placed it in the live coals and hot embers. At that time the fire had burned down to a large bed of glowing coals.

Gearheart felt sure he could not eat fish cooked in mud, but when at last Joe took the fish from the fire and broke the hardened clay away with the skin of the fish attached to it

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and then cut the fish into half and laid each portion on a fresh green leaf, it looked so white and clean that Gearheart's appetite came to him and he ate and relished it as he had seldom relished food. At last the day was ended and the two returned home.

After that day there grew and grew by imperceptible degrees a kind of comradeship between the two. Gearheart did not hesitate to be taught by Joe as to the ways of the wild creatures, and in turn the boy became less reserved and felt more free to inquire concerning the contents of books. Thus, day by day, week by week, he toiled up the rugged road to knowledge—no royal road by any means.

Three years passed by. They were tedious years to Joe—long years of constant effort. But the years were brightened by frequent visits to Rose's home and by visits from Rose, as well as by occasional Indian Festivals and annual vacation when Gearheart went to visit

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his own people and Joe visited the deep forest along the mountain sides and roamed at will, as he grew and grew.

One summer Gearheart was told that he need not return in the autumn, as Joe was to be sent to boarding school. One morning after Gearheart had gone, Joe's father said to him, "I want you to have a good education; to learn the ways of the white man, for I am not sure what the future holds for us. There is among our people an unrest. There is a pressure from some of the people of this state upon the National Government to cause us to be removed from this place. Many Cherokees have already moved away. Rose's father and many others are going west. We might all have to go in the end, but I hope not, for I do not wish to go. Our people live here now, but the white men want our homes and are trying to get them. It seems that it is best for you to learn well the lessons that the

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schools can give you and, therefore, I think you should go to boarding school. You are a good boy and a good student.

"I should tell you, for you should know, that you are not wholly of Indian blood. Years and years ago, a man born in Scotland came to South Caroline and thence to Savannah. From there, through trading with Indians, he came into this country and married an Indian girl. That girl was your great-grandmother, so you see that you have some blood of white people in your veins.

"You have a good mind and can easily acquire knowledge. Do you wish an education?" Without hesitation the boy consented. So it was that in autumn Joe said "Goodby" to his grandmother, to Rose, to old Liza and the other slaves, and accompanied by his father went to Kingston, Tennessee, to follow the road to knowledge.

When the little Indian had been placed

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in the care of a good family, his father returned to the old Georgia home, leaving the youth among strangers where he hoped the boy would be able to travel the road to the white man's knowledge. There were many other Indian boys at Kingston and the teachers were sympathetic and competent. As there were athletic games at the school, life soon became as sweet to Joe as it was strange and lonely. But always he was glad when once more at home he could don the hunting shirt, leggings and moccasins and wander among the mountains or along the streams of Georgia, hunting, fishing, dreaming, resting, growing.

In those years unrest was growing steadily in the Cherokee Nation. The white men wanted the Indian's land. In a former generation the white men, as a feeble band of settlers, had sought a refuge; now stronger grown, they asked the Cherokees to move out of the way. This, Joe learned at home, but at school he

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heard little of the growing troubles that were darkening his homeland.

The years passed quickly by, and then Joe, grown to the stature of manhood, was presented to the public as a finished product of the school. After graduating, his diploma carefully packed away among his other belongings, he said goodby to his teachers and fellow-students and again journeyed back to the old home among the Georgia hills.

It was a pleasure once again to be at home; to ride with his father in looking after the herds, or now and then he was entrusted to perform that duty alone. However, Rose was gone somewhere into the far west and he had no real companion. She had gone with her people west of the great Father of Waters. Her people were among the Cherokees that were known as "Old Settlers."\* In the long rides among the herds with his father, or in

\*Cherokees who voluntarily left their homes in Georgia and moved west at the request of the Federal Government.

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their walks in the fields looking after the labor of the slaves, or sitting near the fireside in the great living room at evening, they often talked together and Joe began to learn much of the trouble that threatened the Cherokee people.

One night as they sat by the fireside and grandmother sat propped up in her great arm chair, Joe said to his father, "When I went to school I felt that if I finished I would have traveled the whole road of knowledge, but now I see that I am just beginning."

And his father said, "You are right. You went to school to learn the knowledge of books, the white man's knowledge. There is before you much traveling on the road of knowledge. In a short time Trail Killer will be here. No doubt you realize the fact that you are not acquainted with the history and troubles of our people. Trail Killer has been on a long journey. He is one of our wise men. He will



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spend some days with us, I hope, and tell me of these things. If you desire, you may be with us, and learn all that he knows—all that our people know—of what the future holds for the Cherokees of Georgia.” Then old Liza came in to help her Mistress to bed, for grandmother was getting feeble now. The conversation of father and son ceased, and, save for old Liza’s prattle, no more was said.

Soon Joe climbed the old stairway, as he had in years gone by, and sought his bed, but he could not go to sleep. He felt that in stature and strength he was a man, but that in knowledge he was only a beginner. For a long time he lay awake thinking, now of the troubles of the Cherokees, and again of Rose. What was she doing? Where would the riddle of life end? The road of knowledge, at times, is rough and steep.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE TRAIL OF TEARS

One evening as the Ross family sat at the dinner table, the door opened and Trail Killer entered. The old warrior walked with the grace and ease of a panther. His body was straight and supple, and only the wrinkles in his face disclosed the marks of passing years. A plate was brought for him and he ate in silence. After dinner the grandmother, the two men and Joe went into the great living room and sat by the fire. Trail Killer, in moccasins, leggins and hunting shirt, refused a chair and sat Indian fashion on the great stone hearth, smoking as he gazed into the glowing fire. No one spoke, although Joe was anxious to hear what the old Indian would tell.

Finally Trail Killer said, "I have been in

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each of the seven Cherokee settlements. I have talked with our leaders. The situation is not hopeful. I shall not talk tonight, but tomorrow, after sunrise, we can meet under the big cliff by the tall pine above the blue spring. Then and there we shall talk. I am tired."

Rising, he started to leave the room, but Joe said, "Trail Killer, there is a good bed and a good room where you may sleep to-night."

But the old Indian said, "I'll sleep on the mountain side," and he disappeared in the darkness and rain.

When he had gone Joe's grandmother said, "The situation must be bad, indeed, for Trail Killer is more disturbed than I have ever seen him. As for me, I shall not leave my home." No one answered her. Presently, old Liza came and put her feeble Mistress to bed. Then silence reigned in the mansion.

Joe had hoped that Trail Killer would ap-

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pear at breakfast the next morning, but he did not. After breakfast, father and son left the mansion and walked through the orchard over the brow of the cliff by a trail leading to the blue springs where, under an overhanging cliff, secure from the rain, Trail Killer sat by a small camp fire apparently awaiting their coming.

After simple greeting, Joe and his father seated themselves by Trail Killer's camp fire. They sat for some time waiting for the older Indian to talk. Finally Trail Killer spoke. "This is the situation. Our forefathers came here at the request of the Government and were given this country as their's forever. They built up a form of government somewhat like the white man's government, but including all the principles of justice and freedom that were always enjoyed by the Cherokees.

"In this land every Cherokee has established his home where it best suited him. Here

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your grandfather built one of the most splendid homes of the Cherokees. Up toward Look-out Mountain my father built a cabin home. We lived there and you lived here. Everywhere our people have been contented and happy. Those of us who have so chosen, have lived by tilling the soil. Others have held to the old pursuits of hunting and fishing. Here is room enough for all of us and each can live in comfort. We should be happy and contented.

"We have always known each other as brothers. Few of us have traveled much, but by the talking letters of 'Sequoyah',\* we have all learned much of Cherokee national affairs and we are all of one mind. On the other hand, the white men have moved among us. They have built factories; they have built homes; they have driven the game from the forest in many places; they have looked un-

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der the earth, digging for gold; they have become greedy and now want our land.

"As you know, many of our people have gone far west across the Father of Waters to live there in the land they call Arkansas. I have visited them. In that land they are not so happy and contented as we are here, neither is the country as good as this. Moreover, that country is not adapted to our needs as is this country. However, that land at present is free from control by the white men, and that is good. But time may come when the white men will take that land too, and push the Cherokees out of their homes toward the great waste lands of the barren deserts of the west, and on into the land of the setting sun.

"It is not well. Either we stay here and fight against superior numbers, or we shall be driven like falling leaves westward. I have poken."

Sequoyah was the inventor of the Cherokee alphabet.



Sequoyah

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For a long time they sat beneath the great rock by the little camp fire. The rain continued dripping from the eaves of the cliff and gently falling over the hills and valleys. It was a dark and dreary day, and Trail Killer had indicated a dark and dreary outlook for the Cherokee people.

By and by, Joe's father said, "Trail Killer, if we should be required to move, will not the Government at Washington pay us well for our homes, help us to get a start in the new land, and guarantee us peace and protection in the western wilderness?"

"The Government at Washington," said Trail Killer, "seems to be listening to the leaders of the white people in Georgia who are our enemies. Of course, the Government promises to pay us for our land, but the Cherokee who would willingly sell his lands, the homes and graves of his fathers would be base enough to sell his mother's breast. The



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Government also proposes to help us and give protection in the western wilderness, but if our people take up the trail for that new land, it will be a "Trail of Tears!" It is not a pleasant thought."

Then Joe spoke, "May I ask, Trail Killer, why we cannot hold our homes here by force? These lands are not worth to the white man what it would cost to drive us from them, and as for me, it seems that I would rather resist than yield."

"Son," said old Trail Killer, "your feelings do credit to your station, but the final judgment in this matter must be rendered by the councilors of our tribe. If we resist, it will be a bloody war. And that is not a pleasant thought either. I have spoken."

For a long time the three sat by the fire and listened to the patter of the rain while Joe again wondered what the future would be. Then Trail Killer arose and moving quietly

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out into the rain disappeared along the trail leading toward New Echota. When he had gone, Joe's father said, "Trail Killer goes to our Council to state before the leaders what he knows of the situation. The Cherokee people must make an important decision. But I have faith in the national Government at Washington. I cannot believe that they who rule the land would be so base as to use their great power in blighting the hopes of the Cherokees."

Then the father and son left the camp fire and went back to the comfort of their home. But, day by day, Joe kept on wondering what the future held in store.

While rumors swept through the country like autumn fires, the Cherokee Council decided that the Indians would remain in their homes, but advised against any violence. The optimists hoped for the best; the pessimists

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prophesied the worst, and the great body of Cherokees remained in painful doubt.

For two whole years the Indians were striving to keep their homes. At last final decision rested in the hands of the Federal Government, and the Cherokees at home could do naught but wait and hope.

Month after month suspense hung over the Cherokees. Week by week they waited to hear that their delegates at Washington had prevented the ratification of the treaty of New Echota—a treaty that ceded all their lands in Georgia and provided for their removal to lands west of the Mississippi.

When, therefore, news reached the Cherokee settlements that in spite of their protests the treaty had been ratified at Washington, they were numbed with disappointment. Yes, it was true! The Cherokees had staked all upon the Government at Washington and lost. All was lost!

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General Scott took up his headquarters in New Echota, the capitol of the Nations. From there he issued a proclamation announcing that the President had sent him with troops to cause the Cherokees to join their brethren beyond the Mississippi River, and that on or before September first, every Cherokee man, woman and child must be on the way to the west. Stockades and forts were built at convenient places and soldiers were sent into the surrounding country to search every home, every cave, and every hillside for Indians and bring them into camp.

As the appointed time drew nearer and nearer, through the valleys and over the mountains, came the Cherokees to their appointed place. Sometimes they came by themselves, but sometimes they were brought in by soldiers. At any rate, they were finally assembled in rude quarters which had been prepared for them. The soldiers in immediate

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charge were executing military orders, not discussing them. These orders were explicit—"Bring in all Cherokees. Brook no delays under any conditions." Steadily the assembling went on until all were present, counted, listed and reported as ready.

Then one bright day in autumn it was announced by the commanding officers that the first quota of Cherokees was in readiness to start on the trail westward. Wagons and teams stretched in seemingly endless lines along the dim trail through the forest. Here and there a group of Cherokees gathered around the wagon or tent of some sick friend or relative. Overhead a cloudless sky and the bright sun stood above this division of the solemn Cherokee Nation as they awaited the signal of the military commander.

Beside the trail lay heaps of embers where previously had stood the rough board shelters which had been temporarily erected for the

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Cherokees and which, on their preparation for departure, had been set on fire.

At last the commanding officer gave the signal. Then old Going Snake, a venerable Cherokee Chieftain, mounted his horse and followed by a cavalcade of younger men, took his place at the head of the column and gave the command in the Cherokee language. The command was repeated down the long column, and the great westward movement of the first detachment of the Cherokee Nation solemnly moved forward over the "Trail of Tears."

There had been no rain of any consequence for some time, and the whole country was dry and dusty. Water for the teams and for the travel-worn people was hard to find. Often the Indians suffered greatly on this account. Moreover, the low spirits of the Cherokees at this time made them more susceptible to attacks from diseases of every kind.

On account of the great amount of sickness

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prevailing in the camps, and of the unusual drouth of the land along the route to be traveled, the situation was distressing. General Scott, who was in immediate charge of the removal, delayed the movement of all the other camps of Cherokees so that several weeks intervened between the movement of the first quota of Cherokees and the last. This last quota did not leave their camp grounds at Battle Snake Springs near Charleston, Tennessee, until October 31st. Joe was with this detachment.

Joe's father, and many other Cherokees, still stoutly maintained that much as it was to be regretted, since the delegates of the Cherokees had failed to prevent the ratification of the treaty, and hard as the consequences would be, and since the Indians had submitted their cause with their pleadings to the Federal Government, and that body had decided the case, the Cherokees must

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comply with the conditions stated. They believed that in the end the Federal Government would see the error and would right the wrongs of the Indians. So he and Joe went about their affairs as of old. Joe at this time looked after the herds and the slaves, and Mr. Ross gave his whole time and attention to caring for his mother, who was seriously ill.

One day Joe, returning to his home from looking after the herds, was surprised to see the house surrounded by armed soldiers. Dismounting and crossing through the barnyard, he leaped over the fence and demanded an explanation of the first soldier whom he met. Just at this time Mr. Ross, hearing the voice of Joe in anger, appeared in the door and motioned his son to keep quiet. Mr. Ross apologized for his son and asked permission to place his sick mother in the family carriage which old Bige and Liza had made ready.

Joe immediately went with his father, and



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the two lifted the grandmother from her bed of sickness and carried her to the waiting carriage, where old Bige was ready to drive and old Liza to serve.

Joe and his father got their saddle horses and rode by the carriage. That night the soldiers made camp by the roadside, and all night Joe's grandmother pleaded to be allowed to return, while alternately her son and grandson tried to console her. Toward morning her pleadings ceased to be rational and before the camp broke she had passed away.

The two Indians and the two faithful slaves asked permission from the guard to be allowed to return and bury their dead in the old family burial ground where she had wished to be placed, but they were not permitted to return. They were, therefore, forced to bury their dead by the roadside and journey onward.

They took up the march on the second day

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of the "Trail of Tears" with hearts no lighter. When they arrived at the central camping place, or stockade at Rattle Snake Springs, they found temporary shacks erected for the women and children, but the men slept on the bare ground.

That night, as Joe lay on his uncomfortable bed, he thought of the treatment being received by the Cherokee Indians, and almost rejoiced that his grandmother had died on the first day of the journey. He did rejoice that Rose Starr had gone on in childhood and was not compelled to endure the hardships that were being heaped upon these people.

There were dreary days at this camp. Few Cherokees had any hope of comfort and prosperity. Joe had at least one hope—he would meet Rose again. It was the only oasis in the great desert of the future.

It was some ten days after reaching Rattle Snake Springs before the detachment was

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ready to start. During all his time in camp old Liza was the only one of the Ross household that talked much, but she talked whenever anyone would listen, and sometimes when alone. No one seemed able to console her or to control her, and she could not control her emotions or her tongue. Always at meal time she would say, "Master, I know these victuals are not fit for quality to eat—not even fit for niggers, but these ignorant soldiers won't allow us anything else." Again and again during each meal her master would raise his hand to silence her, and again and again she would begin all over again, "this camp is haunted, Master. Didn't we hear the spirit footfalls in the bushes last night? Didn't we, Bige?" O, Lordy, I can't live long now. I know. I'se just as good as dead."

Old Bige talked little and each day he ate less. At last, early one morning the sound of old Liza's voice stirred the camp and echoed

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along the Hiawassee River, by which their camp was made. "O Lawsy! O, Lawsy! Bige! Bige! Master, come quick! Bige is gone, gone, gone!"

They found her kneeling beside old Bige, who no longer heeded, and they buried the faithful old slave on the banks of the Hiawassee. Liza wept more than ever, but talked a little less, as the detachment moved steadily on toward McMinisville, and hence on toward Nashville. As the detachment moved on from Nashville toward the Kentucky line, Joe became more and more alarmed about his father who ate little and talked to no one.

For days and days the young Cherokee noted the ravages of fever and worried look in his father's face, and again and again he noted the loss of strength. So many had died thus on the "Trail of Tears," that Joe knew what to expect. No amount of effort could get Mr. Ross to talk or ever to consent to be

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assisted in any way. By and by, the father became too weak to ride horseback, and was transferred to one of the wagons. Night by night, Joe and the faithful old Liza sat by the sick man as he lay on his blankets in the cold autumn weather—Joe silent, wide eyed and alert, while the faithful old slave talked and nodded alternately.

At Hopkinsville a halt was made to bury White Panther, a noted Cherokee. Someone told Joe's father of the warrior's death and he said, "It is well." Those were his last words, for he seldom talked. It was only the next night as he lay in the falling snow, and Joe and Liza were busy raising a temporary shelter over him, that his eyes became fixed in death. At dead of night, as the snow fell silently, the Indians prepared the grave and lowered the body into its resting place. The kindly snow covered the new grave by the side of the

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"Trail of Tears," and in the morning the detachment moved on.

Liza was attached to another family and Joe asked to be allowed to help the hunters. As a hunter, he scouted far aside each day to bring in game. He was a very successful hunter too, and brought in much game for the sick and feeble who could hardly subsist upon the coarse food furnished by the government.

It was dead of winter and the Indians suffered much from the severe weather. Daily they fell victims of exposure. At last they came to the Ohio River, crossed into Illinois and finally reached the great Father of Waters at a point near Cape Girardeau, but the Mississippi was packed with ice so that the detachment could not cross.

For weeks they camped there on the Illinois side of the river, sleeping on the frozen ground, at night caring for the sick, and by day

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burying the dead. Old Liza's unmarked grave is at this point by the side of the long camp on the "Trail of Tears," but not many tears fell upon her grave. Rather, Joe sighed in relief that the faithful old slave was now at rest for she had suffered most terribly.

When the Cherokees crossed the Mississippi River and journeyed on toward Springfield, Missouri, Joe was, insofar as immediate family ties were concerned, a lone Indian. Day by day, he went out as a hunter, and night after night, returned with game to feed the hungry, the feeble, and the sick.

After the Indians had passed Springfield and were descending the western slope of the Ozark Mountains, there came a time when Joe's riderless horse returned to the Cherokee camp at night. The scouts, who were sent back next day, returned to the detachment two days later and reported that they found no trace of the missing hunter.

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The Cherokee ranks, thinned by an enormous death toll, reached their new lands in March. Joe was counted as one among the many of those who had died along the "Trail of Tears." He was so reported by those who conducted the forced removal of the Cherokees.



## CHAPTER V

### THE OLD TRAPPER

Although Joe had been numbered among those who had died enroute, and all of his comrades were sure that this report was correct, he was not dead. For days the young Indian had been suffering with intermittent fever, but he had kept up his work as a hunter, without making any complaint to the soldiers who were in command.

One afternoon, while hunting, he had been overcome by the fever and had fallen from his horse when he tried to dismount and seek shade. For some time the horse stayed near by grazing, but when a rifle shot rang out close by, the horse ran away from his master's side. Later, through instinct, the riderless horse rejoined the Cherokees, and the

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absence of the rider was accepted as proof that another Indian hunter was dead. It was thought that he had been killed by some wild animal, or that he had deserted and run away. But the latter seemed improbable, for if he should have run away he would have kept his horse. Whatever comments his friends made were never heard by the soldiers, and Joe was entered on the records as "missing enroute, probably dead."

Immediately after the sound of the rifle shot and the dashing away of the riderless horse, a grizzled old trapper, sturdy and cunning, approached cautiously, as if expecting to encounter the rider of the horse. Low moans near by (for in his delirium Joe was moaning) were heard by the trapper and lead him to stealthily approach the fallen man.

"Well, I declare, it's an Indian and he must be hurt!", said the old trapper, as he looked down at the prostrate form. Soon he noted

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the fever flush, and a hasty examination revealed the fact that Joe was a very sick man.

Returning to the carcass of the deer he had killed, and quickly hanging it up in a tree, the old trapper came back to the sick man. Picking up Joe's rifle, he placed it and his own gun by the tree and then stooped and lifted the Indian, and with this load he disappeared down the mountain slope. It was not far to the trapper's rude home, and there in his own bed he placed the sick man. Then, talking to himself the while, the old man began to labor for the comfort of his guest.

"Sure, he's a Cherokee Indian. I can tell 'em. I bet he's pretty sick—fever—sure a lot of fever." But all the time he was busy.

The old man had carefully ministered to Joe's wants for many days, while the Indian lingered unconscious in the cabin, and his fate hung in the balance.

Long, long ago, even before Joe was born,

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a youth fleeing from his native mountain home, came into the Ozark mountains from St. Louis and formerly from far beyond that place. He followed an old, old Osage Indian trail across these mountains past the present site of Springfield, Missouri, where the trail ended. Then he kept on in a southwesterly direction for several days' journey into the lonely forest. Here he stopped, feeling that pursuit would never follow that far.

In the Ozark Mountains are many natural caves formed in ages of the long, long ago. On either side of the mouth of one of these caves arose solid, perpendicular walls about twelve feet apart and extending for some fifty feet south from the cave's mouth. Over the north half of these two walls, which were perhaps nine feet high, the youth constructed a roof of tree trunks, stones and soil, and in later years over this the grasses and wild flowers grew. The south end of the roof extended

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over a rude stone wall, which the wanderer had built, and in which was a rude door. In the space between these walls, not covered by the roof, grew some trees and a tangle of bushes and vines, so that one passing by would not be able to see the home. Over the mouth of the cave the wanderer hung a deer skin. Soon, however, he found that by leaving the deer skin down the smoke from his fire would be drawn into the cave, from whence it found an exit, hence no chimney was built.

Some thirty feet back in the cave a stream of clear, cold water rushed by. Where it went, he never knew, but it never ceased to flow or seemed to diminish. This home was a most wonderful place for concealment and for comfort.

In summer when the heat was intense outside, he could sit in the coolness of the cave, and in winter time with his door closed, the temperature of the atmosphere from the cave

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helped to keep his room more comfortable. When fire was needed, no telltale smoke arose to give publicity to the passer by.

For more than thirty years this refugee lived here, and only the Osage Indians knew of his home. They called him the lone one, but they never disturbed him.

It was no wonder, therefore, that the Cherokee scouts, sent out to look for Joe, found no trace of him. He was most completely hidden away in the wilds of the Ozarks.

For many days, while Joe remained unconscious, the trapper worked faithfully, administering such remedies as he knew, and giving such care as he was able to give. When consciousness returned to Joe, he was lying in the dimly lighted home and the first sound of which he was conscious was the sound of the water in the cave rushing by the opening. The old man had left the deer skin down so that the cool air from the cave might help to reduce

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the fever. Feebly, Joe tried to inquire of his whereabouts, but the old trapper replied. "You are with an old friend. Be quiet and go to sleep again."

Gradually strength returned to Joe, and in time he was able to talk freely and then he told the old man of the forced removal of the Cherokees.

"Well," said the trapper, "I was always a friend of the Cherokees."

"When did you know the Cherokees"? said Joe.

"Never mind that son, that was before you were born."

"Well, at any rate, I want to thank you for saving my life, because I feel that only for your care I should never have recovered."

"Don't mention it at all, boy," said he.

For a long time the old man smoked in silence and then said, "You are the first Cherokee I have seen for more than thirty years."

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In taking care of you I only tried to pay a debt that I owe. Long ago in Tennessee, while under the influence of liquor, I killed a man named Thompson, and a Cherokee Indian helped me get away. To him I owe my life. I have been a refugee and my life has not been as pleasant as it might have been if I could have lived in my old home."

"Thompson!" exclaimed Joe. "Old man, was this near Kingston?"

"Well," replied he, "it might have been and again it might not have been. Why do you want to know?"

"Well," replied Joe, "I went to school at Kingston and I knew old Bob Thompson. I also think that I know the incident to which you refer. If so, you did not kill Bob Thompson. You only wounded him, and besides, you were both drunk. They think back there in your old home that you were killed by Cherokee Indians. Thompson was more sorry than



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anybody else, for he felt that he was mostly to blame. He was older and he lead you into the habit of drinking. I shall be glad to write to Tennessee and tell them that you are still alive."

"No, don't do that. Let them think on. Let them think on. But I am glad that I did not kill Thompson. A Cherokee Indian, who was my friend, guided me through the settlements at night and directed me on toward the Mississippi River which I crossed at St. Louis and then came here. But son, I have never tasted liquor since, and I never shall. It would not do any good to tell them that I am alive. I am an old, old man now and I have no friends outside of these mountains and none here, except the Osage Indians."

Long into the night they talked, and Joe told him of his early life in Georgia and of Rose, of days of their childhood, and of the forced removal. At last the old man said,

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"Now, that no harm can come of it, I shall tell for the first time, and perhaps for the last time, the story of my own life.

"I grew up near Kingson, Tennessee. My father died when I was a baby, and in my early teens I was left a double orphan by the death of my mother, who had reared me from childhood. At this time I went to live with Bob Thompson, and then one night when we were both drunk we fought with knives and I thought that I had killed him. I fled to the Cherokees and on into this wilderness. I followed an Osage trail from St. Louis far into the Ozarks and then on here.

"The Osages sometimes come here and visit me. They have named me 'The Lone White One,' and I believe they think that I am touched in the head.

The next morning Joe announced that he was going to his own people and the trapper prepared to accompany him for part of the way.

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For several days they journeyed south by southwest. Then the old trapper stopped on a prominent ridge of the Ozarks, and pointing southwest said, "Yonder winds a little stream which the Indians call 'Medicine Creek' (Spavinaw). It winds it's way down to Grand River. On this side of Grand River and on the other side, you will find the Cherokee whom you seek, for they are building homes. Now, son, don't give any thought to me. Go on to your people, but if you ever hunt in these parts, come to my home and you will always be welcome. Maybe you'll find Rose or some one you love and settle down to a happy life. I hope so."

Then, with a strong handclasp and an unspoken goodbye, parted the passing friends of the season—a young Indian and an old trapper—a red man and a white—on the western slope of the Ozark Mountains.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE WINDING TRAIL

Joe, following the directions given by the trapper, went down the Spavinaw River to where it empties into the Grand River. Then he began to find Cherokee Indians, from whom he soon learned that among the \*old settlers there had been a Mr. Ross, but that he had been dead for some years and that last year his daughter died.

This news item destroyed all of Joe's plans. If Rose were dead he did not wish to go to her people. He had no family ties of his own, in fact, he did not seem to know where he wanted to go. Upon the invitation of a settlement of Indians, he decided to remain with them. Later he and three other young Cherokee Indians of this settlement decided to go

\*Old settlers—These Cherokee Indians who had removed voluntarily from Georgia to lands west of the Mississippi River.

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West through the \*\*Cherokee Outlet to the Buffalo Hunting Ground and stay in that region until the annual fall buffalo hunt of the Cherokee Indians.

These young Indians were all well armed, mounted and equipped. They were happy because the lure of the big game trails; of the great plains; of the free, open air of the wide ranges, and adventure were just beyond. Freely they talked among themselves, but Joe, true to his Indian nature, never told aught of his sorrow for Rose. However, he did tell them much relating to the details of the "Trail of Tears."

Day by day, they pressed onward across the hills, open plains and wooded valleys until they came to the valley of the Cimarron River. Up this valley for some days they hunted, camped and rested, but gradually they

\*\*Cherokee Outlet—A strip of lands extending west from the original Cherokee Indian Reservation to the great plains as an outlet to the Buffalo Hunting Grounds.

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moved on westward. Finally they decided to leave the Cimarron Valley and strike out across the great plains. The next day they separated to go hunting, agreeing to return to camp at night and start early the next morning across the plains on the last lap of the journey to the Buffalo Hunting grounds.

They knew that in autumn a large Cherokee hunting party would come for buffalo, and they intended to return with these hunters. Late in the afternoon Joe returned to camp, to find that one of his companions had been accidentally wounded. In the discussion that followed, it was agreed that his own companions would return with the wounded youth. Joe had no desire to return. Therefore, he said he would go on and wait in the Buffalo Hunting Grounds.

After these companions had gone back to the settlement of Cherokee Indians, Joe moved on alone toward the hunting grounds. Day

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by day he pressed on westward and found the plains to be, indeed, a paradise for hunters. Antelope were plentiful, and the trick of taking them was very simple. Usually the hunter displayed some article of clothing, hoisted on a stick near by his place of concealment, and then, antelopes, urged by curiosity, would approach until many of them were standing within easy shooting range. Then Joe would shoot the one he wished, and the others would scamper away over the boundless plains.

One day when Joe was racing his pony down a valley to get beyond a moving herd of buffaloes, the pony fell and broke it's leg. Here, indeed, was a dilemma. If he left the wounded horse on the plains the wolves would soon kill it. If the wolves did not find the wounded pony, it would be unable to get to water and would die in a few days. Joe could not remain to care for the horse, so, as the only

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merciful think to do, he shot it to relieve it of it's misery and, rifle in hand, pressed forward feeling that he was sure to find the Cherokee hunters later. Gradually pressing westward, he at last stopped and lingered near what he thought was the end of the Cherokee strip, for now he began to feel that the Cherokee people were his people and that he must return. Once more he was anxious to go back into the Indian country.

Late in summer he chanced upon a grassy meadow, through which flowed a willow-bordered stream. Deep gulley lead down from the slopes in a southerly direction through a meadow which was at times dotted with antelope, and at other times almost covered with buffaloes. On the slopes near by was plenty of timber, so here he felt would be a good place to make a permanent camp. He erected a tepee of buffalo hide, provided himself with plenty of robes and lived easily and



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comfortably by hunting, as autumn drew near and he waited for the Cherokee hunters.

Soon summer passed away. The hot winds, the long cloudless days, and the quiet, lonely nights of the summer season gradually changed into the cool days and frosty nights of autumn. Then Joe grew more and more restless. Frequently he made long excursions out over the plains, ever looking for his people, but never seeing them. Oceans of grass lay dried up from summer's heat and autumn's frost. Day by day, he watched but saw no trace of his tribesmen.

Frequently great herds of buffalo passed by, but he had no use for the meat. He was in a very, very wide world of plains. More and more, he stayed in his valley and near his lodge.

Very late in the autumn he went again out on the great plains on a two-days' journey. As usual, he was looking for some sign of his

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countrymen. One afternoon, as he sat quietly in a sheltered spot, he saw two Indians approaching cautiously. He knew they could not have seen him, because he was so seated that the tall prairie grass would prevent them from seeing him. But they appeared to be seeking someone. They were yet a long way off and Joe thought they might be his two companions seeking him, as they had promised, but maybe they were not friends, and so Joe remained concealed.

Within less than half an hour they had covered the wide distance intervening and were nearing his hiding place. During all this time he had hoped they were Cherokees, but fearing they were not, he had given no sign to indicate his presence. By and by, they crossed a swell of land in plain sight and he easily discovered that they were not Cherokees, but Pawnees.

Then he concluded that he was farther west

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than he had thought, and that there were other Pawnee hunters or warriors in the immediate vicinity. He reasoned that even should he succeed in killing both of these trailers, he would be followed by their avenging clansmen, and that it was no use to start a fight which he could not finish. Soon the two Pawnee Indians had passed, without having seen him, and were going on cautiously, evidently on the outlook for enemies. Joe sat still where he was, and the two Indians passed out of sight. All night he stayed out there waiting and watching, but without seeing any more Indians.

Dayligh revealed no Pawnees, but as the two trailers had gone toward Joe's permanent camp, thither he would not return for he thought that by this time they had discovered his hiding-place and perhaps were lying in wait for him. He, therefore, decided to make his way eastward very cautiously. After eat-

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ing of the dried meat, which he had brought with him, he rose, and all day long ceaselessly treked eastward through the wide plains, but no sign of humankind greeted his vision. The evening shadows came on and Joe rested, eating again of the dried meat. In the cool night air, when the stars had come out, he set his course by them and pushed on eastward over the boundless plains.

At sunrise, he ate the remainder of the meat and lay down in a dry wash, or gully, to sleep. It was mid-afternoon when he awoke. Cautiously he surveyed the horizon, but no human beings were in sight. However, not fifty yards distant from where he lay were a half a dozen antelopes quietly grazing. Joe was hungry. Carefully thrusting his rifle through a thick tuft of grass, he took aim. One antelope fell and the others scampered away. Securing his game, the young Indian went to a deeper ravine, where he prepared and enjoyed

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a good meal, after which he slept again until night. Then once more he pressed on eastward.

The next morning he stopped at the edge of the plains where the land was washed deep with gutters as it broke away in rolling hills toward a river valley. Here were a few trees and some boulders, making a good hiding-place and a lookout, both over the plains and the valley. After eating his breakfast, he again slept.

In this place he stayed for many days and the air grew cold. One day a herd of buffaloes came up from the river valley, grazing lazily. Two of them were soon lying down in the sun, only a short distance from Joe's camp. One of these he killed, taking the hide and preserving much of the meat, which he dried in the sun.

Some days later the storm clouds of winter raged up the river valley and on to the great plains, covering the earth with a mantle of

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white. Digging a small cave under one of the overhanging boulders, Joe made himself a comfortable place in which to rest at night. During the day he was busy making a pair of moccasins from the buffalo hide, and a hunting shirt from buckskin he had tanned. Because of the fresh snow, it was impossible for him to travel from place to place without leaving a trail, so he remained in camp for several days. Some days it would be warmer, but the next day would not be so comfortable. However, the snow seemed to be gradually melting away. At last the wind came from the north and it grew steadily colder. Within a few hours the snow became so crusted over that Joe could travel on it without leaving any trail. Then he started on eastward once more. Late one afternoon Joe was looking for a place to camp, when a large column of smoke on the horizon told him that white men were camped there. No Indian would so advertise

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his presence as to send up vast clouds of smoke. Quickly he approached the encampment of these strangers. It proved to be an encampment of a belated freight train returning over the Santa Fe Trail. Leaving his gun, so as not to draw the fire of the white men, Joe openly approached their camp. At a good hundred yards distance he was stopped by the freighters, but when he spoke to them in their own tongue, they permitted him to come forward and tell his story.

After he had related his adventures, and replied to all their questions, the "wagon boss" (foreman) said:

"The Pawnees have been after us and they have attacked us once. Two of our men were killed in the fight and we are short handed. If you wish to go back to your settlement, you may join us and drive one of the teams."

To this, Joe readily consented. Then he brought in his rifle and was fitted out with

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blankets. That night he slept in a covered wagon, rolled in woolen blankets, while the white storm gods raged over the western plains.

In the morning, although the snow was drifted badly, the teams were yoked up and the wagons crept cumbersomely onward toward the east. Day by day, they traveled forward and night by night, they encamped. The snow became so deep that the cattle could scarcely get enough forage to keep them alive. In fact, many of them died before the wagon train reached the central part of Kansas.

At night each man had his watch to stand and Joe, of course, took turns with the others. So bad were the conditions of travel, and so exhausted were the teams, that the plainsmen made very little progress.

Slowly across the plains rolled the heavy freight wagons, until the tired oxen, reeling



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doggedly through the drifting snow, rolled the great wagon into Fort Leavenworth.

After a very comfortable week spent in and around the Fort, Joe decided that he should now be traveling to the new land of his own people. When this was made known at the Fort, he was offered blankets and other equipment for the journey, but he declined them, knowing that he could make a shelter for himself at night and be able to travel better and faster through the strange country if not loaded with more than his rifle. So once more he set his face toward the Cherokee settlements.

Day by day the young man tramped southward, occasionally killing game as it was needed, and every night making his camp nearer to the land of the Cherokees. He did not hurry, nor did he linger, but drawn by some power which he could not describe, which he could not name, and which perhaps he did

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realize, he steadily went on in a southerly direction.

Day after day he traveled south, and night after night found or made a shelter where he slept. Finally he reached the western slope of the Ozarks once more.

It was almost sunset when Joe reached his old trapper friend's cabin. It was a happy meeting. Joe and his friend talked long into the night, and the old man told him that he had been down into the Cherokee settlements himself. While the trapper did not say so, Joe thought that he himself had been the object of the old man's visit. The trapper had stayed for a week with the Cherokee people and reported to Joe the terrific and tragic struggle between the old settlers and the new-comers. He told Joe that among the old settlers who had been slain in the strife between the Indians was a man by the name of Starr, whose



The land still in the grasp of winter

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death left his widow and two daughters all alone.

The next day, not without protest from the old trapper, Joe terminated his visit, pushing on rapidly toward the settlements in which his friends lived. The land was still partially in the grip of winter when the young Indian descended the southwestern slope of the Ozark uplift, but spring was beginning to make itself felt.

The desire to learn something he did not know, urged the young Indian on faster and faster, and a feeling of mingled doubt and faint hope hurried him southward. Was it possible that the daughter of the dead Mr. Starr could be Rose? Could it be that Rose had a sister and that it was the sister and not Rose who had died just the year before he came to the settlement the first time? Could it be that Rose Starr was still living? The thought of the probability of finding that Rose was gone,

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sometimes appalled him as he lay at night in the still forest. But now and then he felt that perhaps Rose was in want or danger.

At last he entered one of the Cherokee settlements and noted how altered their conditions were from what had been in Georgia. The lack of thrift was evident. Poorly constructed cabins; scarcity of provisions; the small acreage of cultivated land, and the general unimproved appearance of the wilderness country were depressing. Along the way he inquired about the location of the Starr family and finally he was directed to their home.

It was near the noon hour when, emerging from the heavy forest, Joe came to a little cleared field. In a valley and by the side of the clearing stood a two-room log cabin. This, then, was the home to which Rose had come.

At the door Mrs. Starr greeted him, but did not recognize him. Thinking that he had traveled far, she asked him if he would eat.

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When he agreed, she went into the other room and began to talk to someone. Some of the conversation from the other room reached him. It was as follows:

"Rose, let's get something to eat ready for a poor Cherokee Indian. He seems depressed and lost. He looks shabby, but he speaks English well, and may have been educated and respectable at some time."

The rest of the conversation was lost in the rattle of kitchen utensils as the two prepared the food. In a few minutes the young Indian was called into the other room, where an old lady and a young lady waited to serve him. Joe could hardly retain his Indian calm when in the young lady he recognized at once his old-time playmate, Rose Starr. Almost in silence he ate his meal and arising and saying in his most genteel manner, "I thank you," he passed into the other room. In a little while Rose entered and approaching him, said, "We

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think we have known you somewhere, will you tell us who you are?"

"Well," replied Joe, "I think you did know me at one time, but under different conditions. I am known as 'Cherokee Joe.' I haven't been called by my real name for so long that it doesn't seem natural, but at one time I was called 'Joe Ross'."

Joyfully, Rose called her mother and they all sat and talked of the old times and of the troubles through which they had gone.

For a long time, Joe was kept busy answering questions as to the fate of many mutual friends who went on "The Trail of Tears" and of his own wanderings. Then Mrs. Starr said "Joe, when you were so near to us before I wish you had come on to see us." And to this Joe replied, "When I thought Rose was dead something in me seemed to be dead—all hope was gone." Then Rose said, "Joe, it may seem strange to you and at times it

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does seem strange even to me, but I never thought you were dead, not even when we read the official report that you were 'missing enroute, probably dead'. I had always prayed for you and something kept me from losing hope."

"Well," said Joe, "I had always prayed for your safety and when after all the other losses I thought you were gone, everything looked dark."

Mrs. Starr said, "Thank God you are back. I too have prayed for you and it seems that for once, at least, God has heard our pleadings. Joe, I am growing older and am becoming feeble. In my declining years I have formed the habit of lying down and resting or sleeping, I get so tired. Now, if you and Rose will excuse me, I'll lie down for an hour or two." So it was that together Joe and Rose left the house.

That afternoon as Rose and Joe walked out



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into the valley, Rose consented to his request that they be married at once, leave the new land and make their home in the mountains of North Carolina, where some of the Cherokees had assembled after escaping during the removal. Around the evening fireside, however, Mrs. Starr dissuaded them from their determination to go to North Carolina. Joe had no money, no inheritance and no land.

Joe had finally come to the end of the winding trail, and it was there, near to where her mother lived, Rose and Joe selected a site for their home. The house was built on a low, grassy mound, encircled by century-old trees. To the east were timbered hills rising toward the Ozark Mountains. To the west the view was down upon the Neosho River and it's broad valley of alluvial soil. From it's pebbly bed at the foot of a giant elm tree bubbled forth a clear, cool fountain of water that rushed and tumbled down the western slope to join

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the river and flow on and on to the Southland.

Joe did not build a mansion, of course, but a cabin—a home where love could live unhindered. Children came to bless this cottage home, and by industry and thrift, they accumulated property. In time, Joe's little son rode with his father to look after the vast herds of cattle and horses. Perchance on some mornings the boy slept so late that his father did not wait for him. Then little Starr Ross played with his little sister, Rose, or with his dog and pony. Sometimes on winter evenings Joe told of his adventures, while the children listened with rapt attention till the "sand man" lead them away to Slumber Land.

## APPENDIX

### THE CHEROKEE INDIANS

The Cherokee Indians were of the Iroquois stock and were, perhaps, the most important as well as the largest tribe originally east of the Alleghany Mountains.

In intelligence and aptitude for acquiring European civilization, they were conspicuous.

De Soto first visited them in 1540. They had, prior to that time, been pushed southward from their earlier homes by their kinsmen, the Iroquois and Delaware tribes.

The Cherokees were divided into seven clans. At the opening of the seventeenth century these Indians had sixty-four towns and perhaps six thousand warriors. Their towns were of well built log houses.

During the Revolutionary War, the Chero-

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kees fought against the American Colonies and, hence, with the British. Later they were defeated in battle with American troops and then they acknowledged the sovereignty of the United States in the Treaty of Hopwell, November 28, 1785. Their autonomy as a nation was recognized by the United States in 1802.

During the War of 1812, these Indians rendered good service in the United States army.

A portion of the Cherokee tribe removed to Louisiana in 1790.

As early as 1820 the Cherokee Nation had a constitutional government and regularly elected officials in each of the three branches of government.

In 1821 Sequoyah (George Guess), invented the Cherokee alphabet consisting of 85 letters. In 1827 their national paper, "The

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Phoenix," was published in their own language.

In 1802 the State of Georgia ceded all her lands west of the Mississippi River to the United States Government on condition that the National Government could extinguish the Cherokee Indian's title to all lands within the State of Georgia.

A portion of the Cherokees, at the solicitation of the National Government, voluntarily removed from Georgia, but the Federal Government failed from time to time to induce all members of the tribe to give up their homes, the United States Government extinguished the Cherokee titles by sending General Scott with 2,000 soldiers to remove forcibly the Indians from their homes and place them on lands selected for them west of the Mississippi River. This place was called Indian Territory and a portion of this territory was known as the Cherokee Nation, the capital of

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which was Tahlequah. Here the Cherokees built the first institution of higher learning (The Cherokee Seminary), within the borders of what is now the State of Oklahoma.

The Cherokees in spite of the setbacks and losses incident to the removal have made splendid progress as a people.

The Cherokee Indians were divided in loyalty between the North and South during the Civil War. After the war their slaves were liberated and given full citizenship. They were also given part of the lands of the Cherokee Nation as homesteads. This was done by the treaty of 1866.

At the present time the Cherokee Indians are, with few exceptions, citizens of the United States with full rights. Many of them are prominent in various fields of activity.

The following excerpts are from the speech of Hon. Edward Everett, delivered in the National Congress, May 19, 1830, as recorded in

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the Register of Debates in Congress, Volume VI., pages 1066, 1069, and 1079:

"The Cherokees having refused to cede their lands and emigrate . . . despatched a delegation to Washington, in 1824, to make known their determination to the Government to cede no more land. This purpose they communicated to the President and Secretary of War. They also addressed a memorial to the House of Representatives. In this paper they say, "the Cherokees are informed of the situation of the country west of the Mississippi river. And there is not a spot out of the limits of any of the States, that they would ever consent to inhabit, because they have unequivocally determined never again to pursue the chase as heretofore, or to engage in wars, unless by the special call of the Government to defend the common rights of the United States. As a removal to the barren waste bordering on the Rocky Mountains, where water and timber are

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scarcely to be seen, could be for no other object or inducement than to pursue the buffalo, and to wage war with the uncultivated Indians in that hemisphere, imposing facts speak from the experience which has been so repeatedly realized, that such a state of things would be the result were they to emigrate. But such an event will never take place. The Cherokees have turned their attention to the pursuits of the civilized man. Agriculture, manufactures, and mechanic arts, and education are all in successful operation, in the nation, at this time: and whilst the Cherokees are peacefully endeavoring to enjoy the blessings of civilization and christianity, on the soil of their rightful inheritance; and whilst the exertions and labors of various religious societies of these United States are successfully engaged in promulgating to them the word of truth and life, from the sacred volume of Holy Writ, and under the patronage of the general



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Government, they are threatened with removal or extinction. This subject is now before your honorable body for a decision. We appeal to the magnanimity of the American Congress for justice, and the protection of the rights, liberties, and lives of the Cherokee people. We claim it from the United States, by the strongest obligations, imposed on them by treaties; and we expect it from them under that memorable declaration that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

## REMOVAL OF THE CHEROKEES

"The people whom we are to remove are Indians, it is true; but let us not be deluded by names. We are legislating on the fate of men dependent on us for their salvation or

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their ruin. They are Indians, but they are not all savages; they are not any of them savages. They are not wild hunters . . . They are civilized, not in the same degree that we are, but in the same way that we are. I am well informed that there is probably not a single Cherokee family that subsists exclusively in the ancient savage mode. Each family has its little farm, and derives a part at least of its support from agriculture or some other branch of civilized industry. Are such men savages? Are such men proper persons to be driven from home, and sent to hunt buffalo in the distant wilderness? They are planters and farmers, tradespeople and mechanics. They have cornfields and orchards, looms and workshops, schools and churches, and orderly institutions. Sir, the political communities of a large portion of civilized and christian Europe might well be proud to exhibit such a table of statistics as I will read you . . .

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*'A statistical table exhibiting the population of the Cherokee nation, as enumerated in 1824, agreeably to a resolution of the Legislative Council; also, of property, etc. as stated.*

Population .....	15,560
Male negroes .....	610
Female negroes .....	667
Grand total of males and females.....	13,783
Total number of females.....	6,900
Females over forty years of age.....	782
Females from fifteen to forty years.....	3,108
Females under fifteen years of age.....	3,010
Total Number of males.....	6,883
Males over fifty-nine years of age.....	352
Males from eighteen to fifty-nine years of age .....	3,027
Males under eighteen years of age.....	3,054
Add for those who have since removed into the nation from North Caro- lina, who were living in that State on reservations .....	500

### "REMARKS:

"There are one hundred and forty-seven white men married to Cherokee women, and

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sixty-eight Cherokee men married to white women.

“There are eighteen schools in the nation, and three hundred and fourteen scholars of both sexes, thirty-six gristmills, thirteen saw-mills, seven hundred and sixty-two looms, two thousand four hundred and eighty-six spinning wheels, one hundred and seventy-two wagons, two thousand nine hundred and twenty-three ploughs, seven thousand six hundred and eighty-three horses, twenty-two thousand five hundred and thirty-one black cattle, forty-six thousand seven hundred and thirty-two swine, two thousand five hundred and sixty-six sheep, four hundred and thirty goats, sixty-two blacksmith’s shops, nine stores, two tan-yards, and one powder-mill, besides many other items not enumerated; and there are several public roads, and ferries, and turnpikes, in the nation.’

“These, sir, are your barbarians; these are

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your savages; these your hunters, whom you are going to expel from their homes, and send out to the pathless prairies of the West, there to pursue the buffalo, as he ranges periodically from south to north, and from north to south; and you will do it for their good!

“The evil, sir, is enormous; the violence is extreme; the breach of public faith deplorable; the inevitable suffering incalculable. Do not stain the fair fame of the country: it has been justly said, it is in the keeping of Congress, on this subject. It is more wrapped up in this policy, in the estimation of the civilized world, than in all your other doings. Its elements are plain, and tangible, and few. Nationals of dependent Indians, against their will, under color of law, are driven from their homes into the wilderness. You cannot explain it, you cannot reason it away. The subtleties which satisfy you will not satisfy the severe judg-

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ment of enlightened Europe. Our friends there will view this measure with sorrow, and our enemies alone with joy. And we ourselves, sir, when the interests and passions of the day are past, will look back upon it, I fear, with self-reproach, and a regret as bitter as unavailing."

These excerpts are given as an illustration of how intelligent people, other than Cherokee Indians, felt about the forced removal.











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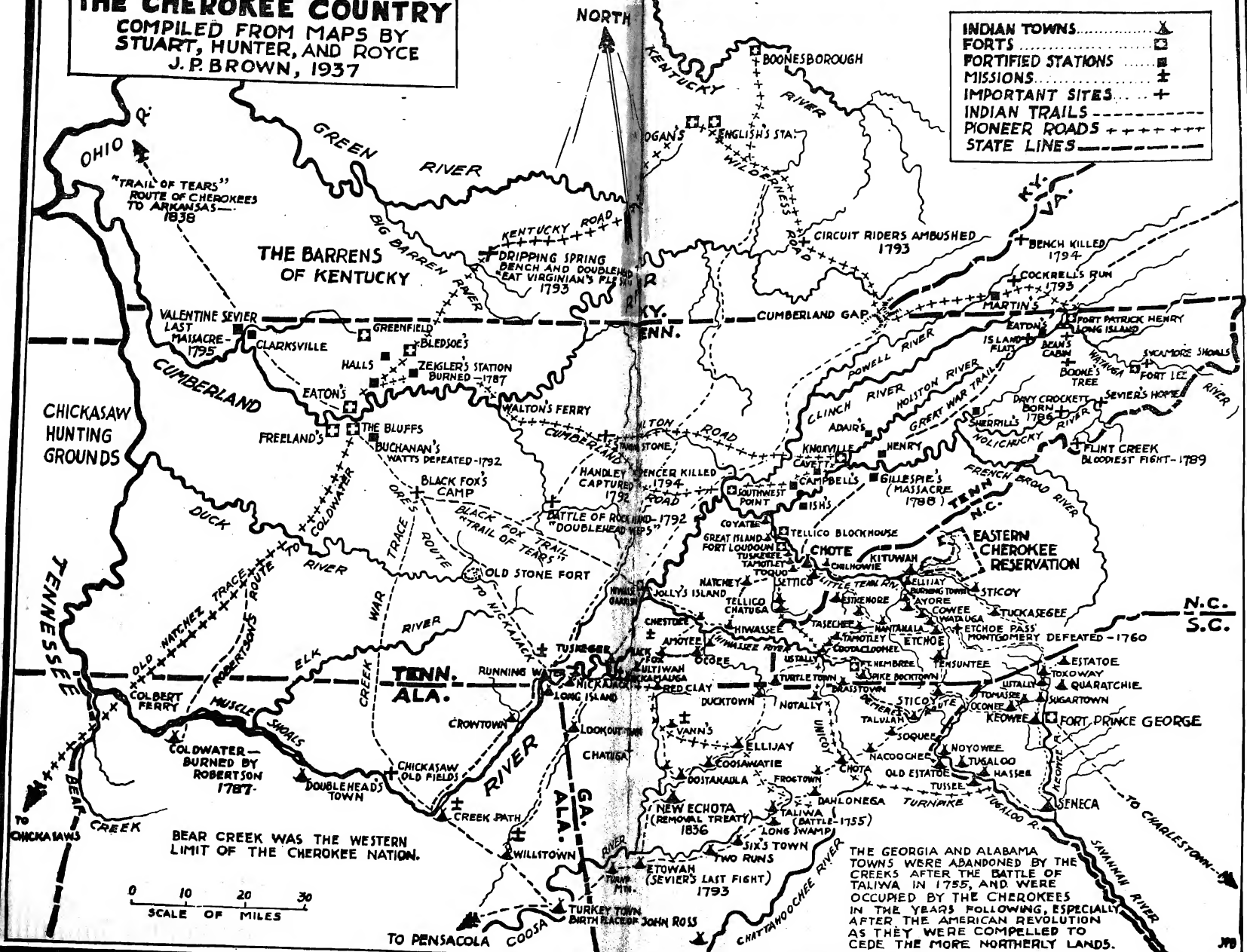
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# THE CHEROKEE COUNTRY

COMPILED FROM MAPS BY  
STUART, HUNTER, AND ROYCE  
J. P. BROWN, 1937

- INDIAN TOWNS.....  
FORTS.....  
FORTIFIED STATIONS.....  
MISSIONS.....  
IMPORTANT SITES.....  
INDIAN TRAILS.....  
PIONEER ROADS.....  
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